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ELIMINATION OF RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION

Letter dated 25 October 1994 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia addressed to the Secretary-General

In connection with the statements made by the representatives of Albania on 14 and 17 October 1994 and of the Republic of Croatia and the Muslim delegate of Bosnia and Herzegovina on 17 October 1994 in the Third Committee during the consideration of the items "Right of peoples to self-determination" and "Elimination of racism and racial discrimination", which were replete with untrue, malicious qualifications and unsubstantiated allegations, upon the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to state the following:

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is not a party to the civil war that has been unfolding in the territory of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The premature recognition of the former Yugoslav republics, under the pretext of the respect for the right of peoples to self-determination, led to the breakup of the former Yugoslav federation. It is evident that no aggression or interference by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in these conflicts has taken place. This fact has been acknowledged in the reports of the Secretary-General on the situation in the territory of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Charges that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is responsible for the continuation of the civil war in the former Bosnia and Herzegovina are totally unwarranted since the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia accepted all peace plans, including the latest plan of territorial settlement by the Contact Group. In order to facilitate the acceptance of the peace plan by the Bosnian Serbs, the Federal Republic of

Yugoslavia has closed its border with the Republic of Srpska, except for foodstuffs, medical supplies and clothing for humanitarian needs. The closure of the Yugoslav border has been confirmed in the letter from the Secretary-General of the United Nations transmitting the report of the Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia addressed to the President of the Security Council S/1994/1124 and reflected in Security Council resolution 943 (1994) on the suspension of the sanctions.

There are no innocents in a civil war. Horrible crimes and atrocities have been committed by all parties to the conflict in the territory of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has always maintained that all those responsible for atrocities and breaches of humanitarian law in the ongoing civil war in the former Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as in Croatia or elsewhere, by whomever they are committed, should be brought to justice.

What is intricate is that while the United Nations is being exposed to misleading appeals about the need to "help the people of Bosnia continue their history of multiculturalism and peaceful co-existence", the Government of the former Bosnia and Herzegovina is pursuing a somewhat different agenda on the ground. The thesis of multicultural interweaving that Mr. Izetbegović and his supporters vocally advocate is nothing but a guise to maintain a vision of unitary Bosnia and Herzegovina in all its aspects of life. This has recently been brought into the limelight by journalist Roger Cohen of The New York Times. In his article of 10 October 1994, entitled "Bosnians Fear a Rising Islamic Authoritarianism", Mr. Cohen mentioned a letter sent by the Bosnian Culture Minister, Enes Karić, to the host of a radio show in Sarajevo ordering him to stop playing "aggressor music" - songs performed by the Serbs. Another official, Mirsad Cerman, the Secretary-General of the Party of Democratic Action, was quoted as saying:

> "Our attitude is that mixed marriages should not be a model, as they were under the Communists. We think mixed marriages are a condition we have to tolerate, but not the way to have good communication between nations. Now, a normal Muslim will marry a Muslim woman and others will be the exception."

In compliance with the aforementioned statements is also Mr. Cerić, spiritual leader of Bosnian Muslims, who, among other things, urged all Muslim women to have at least five children (two for themselves and three for Bosnia) and proclaimed mixed marriages to be "genocide against the Bosnian Muslims".

In the case of Croatia, the situation can be depicted as one where extremism and irrationality are the order of the day. Massive ethnic cleansing of the Serb and other non-Croatian population is still under way. In the Secretary-General's report (S/25777 and Corr.1) it was confirmed that more than 250,000 Serbs had fled from Croatia to Serbia and United Nations Protected Areas. Nevertheless, in the Croatian vocabulary, self-determination is apparently synonymous with predetermination as ordained by

Croatia. Henceforth it is on this premise that Croatia bases its senseless claim that areas under the protection of the United Nations, where the Serbian people constitute a majority, represent "occupied territories of Croatia". What Croatia wants is to expose the entire Serbian population to all forms of pressure and subjugation. Such an environment already exists in some parts of Croatia where those who are not of Croatian origin have been evicted from their apartments and forced to change their names. Very often children have been converted (re-baptized) to the Catholic faith. Recently, the Croatian constitutional court decided that the Serbian Democratic Party is to be banned, accusing it of being one of the principal organizers of a "rebellion against the constitutional order". This is a blatant example of denying a right to freedom of association in Croatia.

As regards Kosovo and Metohija, which is the official name of this province in the Republic of Serbia, the Government and many other competent institutions in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have on numerous occasions made available all relevant information concerning the situation in the field. It is a fact that there is no violation of human rights of the Albanian minority by the legitimate authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in Kosovo and Metohija. The truth is rather that the political leaders of this minority are trying, instigated and financially supported by Albania, to carry out secession, that is, to annex part of the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to Albania, not recognizing legitimately elected Yugoslav organs and institutions, and rejecting any cooperation with them. It is obvious that Albania is abusing human rights issues as a means directly to encourage secession and interfere in the internal affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Albania's discriminatory attitude towards national minorities is part of its large-scale undemocratic practice of violation of human and civil rights. This is evinced by the recent trial of members of the Greek national minority, attempts to displace forcibly dozens of Serbian and Montenegrin families and rigged court trials of political opponents. With its policy of interference and confrontation with all its neighbours, Albania has been increasing tensions and threatening peace and stability in the region.

The fact that the statements of the above-mentioned representatives addressed alleged systematic abuses committed against the Hungarians, Croats and Muslims in Vojvodina and the Sandžak, is not only outside the scope of the agenda items being discussed but an outrageous fabrication and distortion of the truth by those whose overall records show that they are far from the respect of the principles of pluralism, democracy and ideals of multi-ethnic societies. Clear resolve on their part to abandon militant stands and hostile propaganda could be the best way to contribute to the peaceful resolution of the crisis in the territory of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 93 and 94.

(Signed) Dragomir DJOKIĆ
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.